

PLANE PATTERN

by Ernie Humphill



Automatic gadgetry, electronic brain trusting and super communications notwithstanding, one of the more lasting impressions of a recent visit to North American Air Defense Command installations is of the confidence and determination with which the men responsible for defending against air attack are carrying out their task.

In the atmosphere of uncertainty (aggravated by sporadic outbreaks of missilitis) which exists in some circles, it was reassuring to hear General Earle Partridge, NORAD Chief, describe his command as currently capable of providing sufficient defense "to win a war". The situation, according to the General, was much improved in recent months. The years 1957-58 had been the critical period for NORAD.

NORAD's Deputy Command, Air Marshal C. R. Slemon, left little doubt as to what is required to keep the command at its present level of effectiveness. A family of continually improving weapons including both missiles and manned interceptors, the latter a requirement "for as long as we can see."

The Air Marshal, to use a favorite phrase of his own, made it "abundantly clear" that he and his colleagues could not and did not recommend to their governments the purchase of any particular weapon, either interceptor or missile. Their responsibility ended with stating the type of weapons required to do the job.

Having said that, the Air Marshal undertook to answer a recurring question about the status of the Avro CF-105 Arrow. He stressed again that the status of any particular aircraft program was not his responsibility—and then ventured the opinion that on the basis of flight test information available to date the CF-105 would be the superior two-seater interceptor available to NORAD until the advent of the North American F-108 weapons system which could be expected to be operational in five to six years.

Unfortunately, some newspaper reports on the Air Marshal's statements interpreted his remarks as telling the government of Canada that it must buy the CF-105. This despite his efforts to avoid such a misconception.

Air Marshal Slemon was obviously aware that his statements might be misinterpreted and that he might come under fire. He said as much in an impromptu after dinner address following the tour of NORAD headquarters at Colorado Springs.

Nevertheless his statement must stand. He repeated it in detail. It was the truth. His head might roll, if he were inaccurately reported, but he would be derelict in his responsibility if he did not state his honest views of the requirements for the forces under his command.

Readers' Reaction

Arrow Decision

Malton, Ont.

Editor,
Canadian Aviation.
Sir:

I have just finished reading with interest your appraisal of the CF-105 situation and would like to congratulate you for doing such a good job. As you know, I have a keen interest in the whole controversy, and of all the articles and editorial I have read about it "pro or con" your presentation and logic is the best.

Yours sincerely,
J. A. Garratt,
President,
Garratt Aircraft Ltd.,
Malton, Ont.

Toronto, Ont.

Editor,
Canadian Aviation.
Dear Sir:

Good for you! Finally, someone has injected the serum of reasoning into the veins of a dying, all-Canadian enterprise. I, of course, refer to your articles concerning the Arrow-Bomarc controversy.

Apart from being a patriotic gesture, full of the old "Pooh Bah" and "Up the Empire," the continuation of the Arrow program moves a step further, it is a Canadian investment in Canada's future. What is more logical than that? Without it, we might just as well try to conceive the thoughts of a bank without money, or a country without a flag, (which latter in this case requires little imagination).

The costs of both weapons are approximately the same; however, the Arrow, carrying a more impressive range of fire power, boasts nearly three times the effective range of the Bomarc. Why let the enemy come to us, if and when he decides to attack? The Arrow stacks up quite well to the Bomarc as far as airspeed is concerned, so what is the percentage in adopting a one-blam vehicle from the United States, when Canada can produce a better, almost perpetual vehicle?

I have reached the point where I am repeating statements in your articles. I can only hope that, somehow, Diefenbaker will reconsider the proposed defence program and favor the Arrow through the light of logic and reason.

Rich Thake.

The Editor, Toronto, Ont.
Canadian Aviation

Sir: Congratulations on your treatment of the Arrow/Bomarc controversy, which provided a pleasant contrast compared with the uninformed comment that appeared in most other sections of the

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Current & Candid

by Veni Vidi

The members of the Air Transport Board are now preparing their findings on Canadian Pacific Air Lines' bid to crack Trans-Canada Air Lines' monopoly. At time of writing a hush that marked a refreshing change from the Roman Circus of the hearings had fallen over Canadian airline circles. Mind you, the hearings were pretty interesting for all concerned.

For one thing, the student of air transport matters was able to get a good look at just about every figure that either side could think to produce — or make the other side produce. But much more intriguing for those of us who dropped in from time to time was the rapid decline in bonhomie on both sides.

It's been the pattern in Canadian aviation, and really aviation in general, to put forward a united and generally smiling face. "We may disagree on some points," ran the general line, "but we're all jolly good friends really and we only want to advance the idea of flying and aviation in the public mind."

Well the ATB hearings put paid to that!

Feelings ran high in the stuffy Board of Transport Commissioners hearing room, and off duty across the road in the Chateau Laurier the atmosphere was little better. Neither side passed up an opportunity to take a dig at the other either before the board or away from it.

What did it all amount to?

To this observer it seems by and large that the hearings were close to disastrous for CPA. The CPA team just didn't seem to have done its homework. On the opening days TCA counsel had a field day casting some hefty doubts on CPA's plans to depreciate DC-6Bs over ten years and to operate on a schedule calling for all its trans-continental fleet to be in the air at the same time. CPA's statement that it could make money on a 50 percent load factor sent a visible stir through the room.

Later in the hearings CPA made a radical change of course and launched a new line of argument, which appeared far more effective than its earlier case. In a nutshell it was: Alright we concede that we will take more business away from TCA than we had shown in our plans. But TCA is fat and lazy. it could easily trim down to meet competition. If we can't compete now then it will get harder and harder in the future.

That's the stuff to give the fans! It doesn't exactly meet ATB requirements, but it certainly has popular appeal. And the final decision is up to the cabinet.

If we are going to judge the CPA application on facts and figures, its my bet CPA will get little if any of what it wants. But if the powers that be are going to take into account that CPA seems to be aching to give the Canadian public a new service, and that many Canadians have real or imagined grievances against TCA, the temptation to throw caution out of the window and give CPA a chance will be powerful.

Sometimes a good play for the emotions is worth a mountain of statistics!

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Press. There is just one more line of thought I would like to suggest.

More than 90 percent of all arms, aircraft and other military equipment produced is scrapped as obsolete before it can be used in action. The situation will become ideal when the figure reaches 100 percent, and presumably the governments of the world are working towards this end.

The production of these weapons keeps many companies fat, and millions of workers well fed, and as long as the catastrophe of disarmament never hits the world, capitalists and communists alike will prosper. For it is only to pay for arms that the people, rich and poor alike, will allow themselves to be taxed till it hurts. Try to appropriate the same fabulous sums for subways or welfare measures and the taxpayers at large will scream their heads off.

That is why the general atmosphere of adequate employment and circulating prosperity can only be maintained by we selfish beings in a busily rearming world.

But if we must buy arms and aircraft to pour down the bottomless pit of obsolescence, for the sake of Canadian economic, and industrial prosperity, let us build and buy Canadian.

We need the business, the prosperity—and the independence—more than the U. S. does.

"Cynic".

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Historical Data

Saskatoon, Sask.

Editor,
Canadian Aviation.
Dear Sir:

I understand your January issue will be a special edition commemorating 50 years of Canadian flying. Such an edition will inevitably do much to preserve "Canada's flying heritage." I would like to suggest that this would be the appropriate time and place to encourage a continuation of this work.

While completing an MA thesis in economics on the topic, The Early Development of Northern Air Transportation in Canada (1919-1929) I became aware of the existence of much valuable, unpublished material. This material will be lost to future generations unless an effort is soon made to save it. The special commemorative issue could appropriately initiate this effort by appealing to Canada's pioneers in aviation to search out their early records, log books, diaries, letters, photographs, etc., and donate or bequeath them to the major Canadian universities or archives.

Canadian Aviation magazine did much to preserve a detailed record of Canadian flying in the 1930s; with the above appeal the special issue would make another important contribution to the recovery and preservation of much of Canada's aviation history.

Yours sincerely,
G. W. Mitchison.